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# Hearings to Consider Public Defense Guidelines

Joel Stashenko, New York Law Journal

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The first of eight planned public hearings will be held Thursday by the Office of Indigent Legal Services (ILS) to help the agency develop income guidelines for indigent criminal defendants outside New York City to determine who should be provided legal representation at public expense.

The first hearing will be at 11 a.m. in Room 400 at the Onondaga County Courthouse, 401 Montgomery St., Syracuse. They will continue through Aug. 26 at locations in the seven other judicial districts outside of New York City.

Under the settlement between the plaintiffs and the state in *Hurrell-Harring v. State of New York* ([NYLJ, Oct. 22](#)), the ILS must develop statewide standards to determine when income and assets are low enough for defendants to qualify for legal representation.

Eligibility standards for public representation vary from county to county, and sometimes from court to court. The ILS said it will gather information on the typical cost of private attorneys, how much defendants spend on posting bail and how the value of defendants' vehicles and other assets should be factored into the eligibility standards.

The ILS is to produce the eligibility standards by Sept. 11 under the settlement.

Requests to testify in person should be made via email to [publichearings@ils.ny.gov](mailto:publichearings@ils.ny.gov) or by mail to Tammeka Freeman, Executive Assistant, New York State Office of Indigent Legal Services, 80 S. Swan St., 29th Floor, Albany, NY 12210.

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